

# HISTORY OF RAYMOND

By ELIZABETH KING

## NORTH WITH LAND IN MY EYES

Walter Tells His Own Story.

Forty five years ago March 11, 1902, being my anniversary I attempted to write a few things that came to my mind during the first year after arrival. So looking in retrospect to the morning March 10, a

group of people left Great Falls, Montana, headed north for Alberta coming in on the Turkey Trail as it was known at that time. On the train was Ethel Brimhall, his wife and two children and a young man whom I was bringing to Raymond and who would later make his home on this train. We arrived at Sweet

at Fay Holbrooks, and others were Grass and Coult's where the emigrants were detained for a couple of hours, passing inspections. When this was done the conductor shouted "all on board" then we were again making our way towards the village of Stirling. We arrived 9:30 p.m. & conveyance was standing by to take us to the Seely Hotel where we found shelter for the night by these good people, as it was snowing hard and turning colder. We were thankful for a bed even if it was on the floor. Morning came and we were served a good breakfast before leaving on what was to be the last leg of our journey north. We were again conveyed back to the station, after paying our fare which cost 50 cents for all that service. Our train pulled out for Raymond near noon which was the destination we had started for. Hence we were all eyes looking for that town that was only yet a few houses. As we gazed over the wide expanse it did look inhospitable. Many things ran through my mind—would I ever to stay in this outpost of civilization. The train had come to a stop and we were soon off, looking at what did become my future home. My material wealth comprised little to the wealth of friends I've gained in my stay at Raymond. We looked for accommodations which were found at the Raymond Hotel, run by the late Mrs. Chas. McCarty. I got a large room but was told I might have to share it with other patrons. I asked if they would be gentlemen? and she replied yes, they are cowboys and the smoke Bull Durham. So I knew she was right after a week or so of hearing everybody talking about land and the best place to buy. In the meantime I had been taken to different locations. I went to Magrath with Bert Kelley to look at land which was covered with snow to a depth of 6 inches. I told him I was looking for land not snow. On our way back to Raymond a hard

wind came up drifting the snow and obliterating any road mark and with no other marks to guide us we were completely lost.

I soon found it inconvenient to live at the hotel and farm as I had bought land 4 miles west of Raymond where the late Alma Carter also owned land. One day he offered me lodgings for a couple of months which I gladly accepted. Part of the time while we were plowing we took our food along to last us the week. On returning at the end of the week we would take turns driving a team home, the rest of the horses were turned out to grass. Our sleeping quarters were under the wagon while we were at work (Some bedroom). May blizzard and here is something to write home about. It started on the afternoon of May 15. Mr. Carter shouted to me saying, "Look what's coming in from the north." He said we'd better get to hell out of here. I agreed and soon had the horses unhitched, harnesses hung on the brake lever, cut the teams loose excepting the one we drove home. This storm raged with all the fury imaginable for three days or over piling snow to a depth of 2 feet on the level. We became uneasy about the horses at the end of the second day but fearful of venturing out to find them and becoming lost ourselves. We debated, and decided to follow the railway track for a guide, as it was impossible to see more than a few feet ahead. We did follow the track and found our horses in the shelter of a high grade along with many others and some cattle. A few were already dead. This storm was very hard on stock as they had shed their winter coats. When the storm subsided the beautiful May sun came out. Many farmers were short their horses and soon went in search of them always going in a south direction. Very few horses perished in the storm. Men became lost while hunting for their animals, becoming snow blind from the brilliant sun. A great

many cattle perished but the loss was negligible compared to the loss of sheep, whole herds scattered, had taken shelter in coulees, being drifted over completely by the snow. The snow melted so rapidly that all the coulees were turned to raging rivers. We'll you fellows, that and to cross them went contradicted this article. OK now you tell one.

Being a bachelor when coming to Canada I found it very inconvenient to carry on agriculture without a helpmate. So I met a young lady Charlotte Mehew, just out from England and after a short courtship we were married September 4, 1905 by Bishop Anderson.

Our family consisted of 5 sons and three daughters. We were bereaved in the passing of our first born, a son, during the very cold winter of 1906 and 07. Though we feel thankful at this time for the many blessings in the fact that very little ill luck has come to mar our home and prosperity. All our children have married into good families and all live within a radius of 22 miles of the parental home. All of our sons have followed in their fathers footsteps in choosing for their vocations that of farming. Bob, the youngest disliked the farm so he chose Aviation after finishing high school. He had just graduated from Aeronautical school when war no. 2 broke out. First working at Montreal for Fairchild's Aeronautic Company; he entered in the services in 1911 and within the year he was over in Europe fighting the enemy. His experiences were many, having come with in an inch of losing his life each day, many times blacked out by what was commonly called "bends" by coming down to suddenly into heavier atmosphere. His Spitfire was shot to bits during the night at Dieppe, wing and tail shot away.

only the engine and pilot was in a so he was able to land in good old England though he nearly lost an eye in the battle. He didn't like the name of England, so he only a to guard the little island of Malta here the pilots were in the air continually to meet the assault of the enemy. At one time he was having some trouble so attempted to go out of his two bombs. One stuck and he was unable to shake it loose so he called for investigation by other pilots and they decided it was safe to land with the bomb. Butas he touched down the bomb came loose, fortunately it slid sideways for a short distance then exploded shooting his second Spitfire to bits and killing a Maltese at the drone. He was badly shaken but didn't get a scratch His time at Malta was about eight months. Back to England and then leave for Canada. Here he was enjoyed by his mother and dad as well as his brothers and sisters. The good people of Raymond showered him with many compliments on his 30 days leave. In this period he told of many experiences. After returning back to the front he took part in the crossing of the Rhine. He had the honor of escorting the great Churchill while on inspection. When the Rhine was crossed there were some 12,000 planes overhead to meet the assault of the enemy but Jerry stayed away. After his time was spent in Belgium and Holland.

The narrator was a little reluctant in telling this story because it sounds better for someone else to shot to bits during the night at Dieppe, wing and tail shot away.

Walter Zobel.

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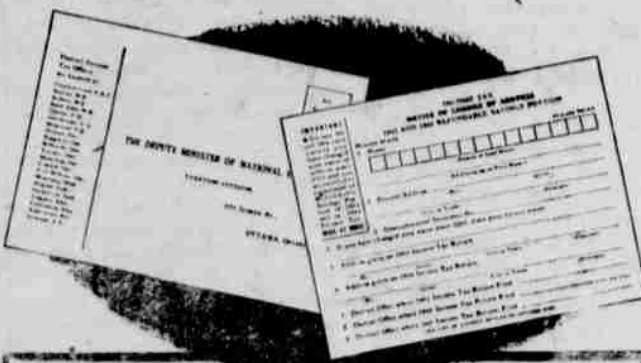
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